

C. C. C. Work Evidence
7 Wildlife Advances

Effects of the tardy but now general recognition of our national needs for wildlife conservation are well demonstrated by accomplishments of the Civilian Conservation Corps during the past three years, Robert Fechner, Director of Emergency Conservation Work, pointed out today in a summary of Federal wildlife activities that have been carried on with CCC help.

More than two dozen camps assigned to the U. S. Biological Survey, the Federal wildlife service, have made possible the development of a system of refuges without an equal in any other country, Mr. Fechner said. Other camps assigned to Federal land-administering agencies have devoted part of their time to activities for improving wildlife conditions on national forests, national parks, Indian reservations, reclamation projects, and grazing districts of the public domain.

Mr. Fechner quoted a statement by Dr. Irm H. Gabrielson, Chief of the Biological Survey. "Since June 30, 1933," said Mr. Gabrielson, "The Federal Government has acquired more than a million and a half acres for wildlife refuges. The Biological Survey has been developing these areas to make them suitable for the birds and to make it possible to administer them efficiently. The Survey has formulated the program and has supervised the work. The CCC camps have furnished man-power.

"The CCC boys have constructed dikes, dams, and other water-control structures to stabilize water levels and store water. Stabilizing the level of shallow fresh-water areas has permitted the growth of aquatic and other vegetation that will furnish food for the birds. Storage helps to maintain a continuous supply of water in the drier areas, especially in the important waterfowl-nesting regions of the northwest. The boys have also developed springs and wells.

"Where food plants for the birds were lacking, the CCC workers have planted them. They have collected seeds and tubers where the plants are abundant and stored them for planting at the right time. The plantings have also included shrubs and trees and field crops that are left for the waterfowl and upland game birds.

"Nesting islands have been built. Fences have been erected to protect wildlife food and cover from destruction by stock. Erosion-control work has been carried on to protect dike surfaces, to prevent silting of waterfowl ponds, and to protect the ranges of big-game animals.

"All these activities", Dr. Gabrielson explained, "will take the areas into better habitat for the birds--refuges in fact as well as in name. Other work by the CCC camps is directed toward the same end by making it possible for the refuge supervisors to protect the birds more efficiently. Truck trails, fire lanes, look-out towers, and service buildings have been provided in this part of the work.

"For the first time in our history," Gabrielson declared, "we have a national program underway that promises a future for our wildlife resources, and the Civilian Conservation Corps is taking an important part in the work of this program."

Wildlife benefits of Emergency Conservation Work are not limited to those resulting from the full-time work of the Biological Survey camps, Mr. Techner pointed out. Every land-administering agency to which camps have been assigned has carried on activities of either direct or indirect benefit to wildlife. More than 600 camps have carried on such work.

The Forest Service CCC work has not only improved conditions for the growth of trees but has also increased the food or "browse" and cover for wildlife.

Fire prevention also lessens the danger that food supplies as well as wildlife itself will be destroyed by fires. Special studies have been made to provide the maximum wildlife benefits along with forest improvements.

The National Park Service has used CCC labor in its work of making the parks and monuments more attractive and suitable for wildlife. Wildlife technicians have had an important part in planning all work projects in wildlife habitat, and in seeing that all the activities contribute as much as possible to a more abundant wildlife.

Mr. Wechner also referred to wildlife benefits of CCC work for the Office of Indian Affairs, the Division of Grazing, and the Bureau of Reclamation. Emergency Conservation work for the Indian Service has included stocking big game/ and game birds and the provision of winter shelters. Through its CCC camps the Division of Grazing has developed additional water resources for the use of wild animals on the range, fenced areas for wildlife purposes, removed poisonous plants from forage grounds, controlled rodents, and made surveys upon which to base range management plans to take care of not only domestic livestock but also game animals.

An outstanding wildlife activity of the Bureau of Reclamation's CCC camps is the development of a refuge along the shores of the Lake Walcott Reservoir at the eastern end of the Minidoka Federal Reclamation Project in southern Idaho. This refuge is being jointly supervised by the Bureau of Reclamation and the Bureau of Biological Survey, and similar projects are being planned for other reservoirs. Camps assigned to the Reclamation Bureau also have carried on winter-feeding activities.